

#bepesticidefree

pesticides and your pet's health

What is a Pesticide?

A pesticide is any chemical substance that is designed to kill a living thing that is considered a pest. Pesticides refer to insecticides, herbicides, fungicides and rodenticides.

What are the Health Effects of Pesticides?

Cancer is by far the most rising concern involving pesticides and pets. Recent studies have shown that dogs living in yards that have been treated with pesticides (particularly 2,4-D) have a higher risk of developing canine malignant lymphoma. In certain breeds, such as the Scottish terrier, the risk of certain cancers can rise by as much as 4 times¹.



How Do They Affect My Pet?

Whether you're using a pesticide indoors (eg. raid) or outdoors (eg. roundup), whether you're spot treating or using a widespread application, your pet is at risk to contact the pesticide. Where a pesticide is applied, the area up to 15 meters in all directions is generally considered contaminated as well. Even small scale applications can contaminate a large area, increasing the likelihood of your pet being affected. By walking on a lawn recently treated with pesticides, a pet can become contaminated. Non-target species, such as birds can also spread the pesticides to your pets. Watch for signs and notices indicating recently treated areas.

Pesticides and Poisoning

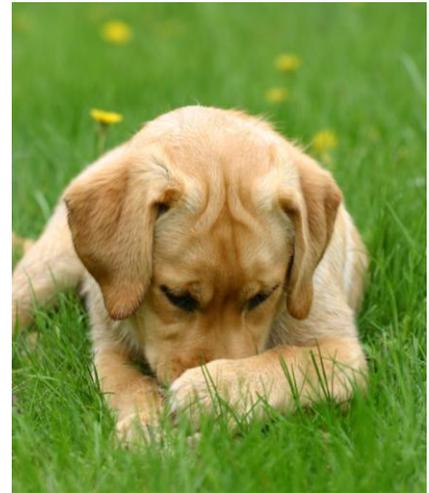
It is only logical that pets are at a higher risk from the use of pesticides. Pets, like children, are lower to the ground and they spend a lot of time in contact with areas that may be contaminated. Many things also go into their mouths after being in contact with a contaminated surface. Self-grooming, and playing with toys also increases exposure.

¹ Glickman, L et al. (2004) *Herbicide exposure and the risk of transitional cell carcinoma of the urinary bladder in Scottish Terriers.*
[<http://beyondpesticides.org/lawn/news/herbicidescaninecancer.pdf>] Revisited on February 19th, 2013

Pets are inquisitive and playful by nature – by simply playing in a yard, park or body of water that has been treated with a pesticide, your pet will be at risk of exposure. Acute symptoms of exposure to pesticides can include strange behaviour, stumbling, excess salivating, vomiting and seizure. Long-term effects can range from liver and kidney damage to neurological damage.

Remember:

- Keep your pets off recently treated lawns!
- Check with the city about pesticide treated areas such as parks and public areas.
- If you do use pesticides, keep your pet off of the treated area for the recommended amount of time.
- Applying pesticides in your yard increases their presence in your home.
- Pets are at a higher risk of contamination because they are closer to the ground and very likely to lick or chew things, such as toys, that are contaminated.



Fleas, Ticks and Worms

Rethink the frequency with which you use insecticide products. Insecticides are often applied to pets on a regular basis without much thought given to it. For example, shampoos designed to kill fleas contain insecticides that can be harmful over the long-term and can contaminate humans through contact with the pet. There are safer alternatives available. For example, Dawn dish soap has been proven to kill fleas by using it as a shampoo. Speak with your vet and educate yourself as to whether or not the use is necessary.

What Can I Do to Protect My Pet?

Consider not using pesticides in your yard. Cosmetic pesticide use is not necessary and is causing health issues in people and in pets. There are alternatives to using pesticides.

Provincial and municipal pesticide by-laws exist across Canada and are by far the best protection against pesticides. Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and PEI are currently pesticide-free for use on lawn and gardens for cosmetic purposes. Large cities such as Toronto and Halifax have also banned cosmetic pesticides. Health Canada has banned the use of fertilizer/herbicide combination products such as Weed n' Feed for cosmetic purposes as of December 2012. For information on supporting a provincial cosmetic pesticide ban in Saskatchewan visit the [Canadian Cancer Society](#) website.

“In 2008 ASCPA toxicologists received over 41,000 phone calls about pets being poisoned by pesticides – insecticides, rodenticides, and herbicides – and fertilizers.” – 2009 ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center

To learn more about the information in this factsheet:

[National Pesticide Information Center](#), [Beyond Pesticides](#), [Health Communities Project](#)

Images from: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gperfect/1282753471/>

It Affects You Too

Having a pet in a pesticide treated yard has shown to increase levels of pesticides in the home by as much as 10 times. These pesticides are often found on the ground, beds and other areas where kids often play and people sleep.



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